

## ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TORRES of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. STANSBURY).

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening as the proud daughter of New Mexico to discuss the transformative impacts of the American Rescue Plan for our State on this beautiful St. Patrick's Day during Women's History Month to highlight the impacts the American Rescue Plan has had for our working families, our kids, and for our entire Nation.

It has been a difficult year—a difficult several years—as our communities have experienced the impacts of the pandemic and the economic struggles that have come with it. When we think back to even a year ago, last year at this time, we were unable to gather safely, unemployment was at an all-time high, so many of our families were struggling, and businesses closed.

One year ago, this body passed the American Rescue Plan. One year later, people are still struggling in our country, and supply chains and our economy are still recovering, but so much has changed. Our economy is growing at a faster rate than at any point since the 1980s. More jobs have been created in 1 year than ever in our Nation's history. Wages are up and more small businesses are opening up across the country than ever before.

Because the American Rescue Plan changed the way in which families put food on the table, provide for their families so that our parents, and women in particular, can return to work and has helped our schools stay open and our families and small businesses stay afloat.

Let's get to the heart of the matter today, which is how this particular piece of legislation has transformed the lives of so many New Mexicans and how our communities have benefitted from these historic policies.

The people of New Mexico, especially our women, are strong, resilient centers of our families, and the roots of our communities. Our women carry us, nurture us, and work hard every day so that we can succeed—like the women in my own life, my own mother, my sister, and the trailblazing women who came before us and support us every day in our communities.

But the challenges and burdens of this pandemic in the past 2 years have fallen unequally and disproportionately on women who have exited the workforce in unprecedented numbers, and on our kids who are resilient, yet still struggling.

As families struggle to make ends meet, keep a roof over their heads, and put food on the table, women have had to dig deep and find creative solutions.

These burdens have fallen disproportionately, in particular, on our Latina and Hispano women, on our indigenous women, our Black women, and women struggling economically every day to make ends meet.

There are countless stories of struggle and resilience and survival in our communities and the impacts of the American Rescue Plan. One from New Mexico's First Congressional District is that of April Trujillo and her four boys in Albuquerque.

After losing her husband in September of 2020, Derrick Trujillo, a small business owner, who owned a small carpet cleaning business, their family struggled in a way that they had never done so before. They were ultimately able to keep a roof over their heads and keep food on the table because of the transformative impacts of the child tax credit and rental assistance programs provided by the American Rescue Plan.

It is by no means a stretch to say that these programs helped to catch this family as they faced potentially becoming homeless at one of the most difficult moments in their life. That is exactly what this American Rescue Plan was designed to do and why we must put these transformational investments in childcare, in the child tax credit, in housing, in food assistance, and our community well-being, and continue them into the future.

They catch families like the Trujillo family when they need it most. It will help to lift up Americans who are facing economic struggles and create opportunities for families for generations to come.

As we celebrate the 1-year anniversary of the American Rescue Plan and celebrate the passage of the historic infrastructure package a few months ago, and crucial budget legislation just this last week, these bills have had a transformational impact on our economy, on jobs, and families across the country, and we acknowledge that the work is not over.

We must extend the child tax credit. We must expand programs to tackle housing and hunger. We must invest in a universal childcare system and caring for our elders. We must tackle drought and climate change. We must stand with Ukraine and global democracy. This is the work ahead and we stand together united to get it done.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have been taught and told from an African proverb that when a tall tree falls in the forest it makes a lot of noise, it gathers a lot of attention, everybody and every entity in the forest knows that something has happened.

A few days ago, a tall tree fell in the "Chicagoland" community where I live. A gentleman, Mr. Pervis Spann, spent the last day of his life. Pervis Spann, to all of us, is known as the "blues man" because he was a great artist who projected, promoted, and entertained us for years.

□ 1700

Pervis was born in Itta Bena, Mississippi. Like many other African Americans who were born in Itta Bena, Mississippi, and anyone else in Mississippi, individuals migrated to other places. Thousands and thousands and thousands of them made their way to Chicago, Illinois.

As a matter of fact, we fondly say that the only place where there are more Mississippians than there are in Chicago is in Mississippi itself. Many individuals left the delta area. So did Pervis Spann. He went to Michigan; worked in Gary, Indiana; and joined the military. But eventually he made his way to Chicago.

He came to Chicago and used his GI Bill to go to broadcasting school, and he got to be very good at it, not only as a broadcaster but also as a promoter.

Ultimately, the Stack brothers bought a radio station, and they named that station WVON. Eventually Mr. Pervis Spann, Vernon Jarrett, Wesley South and a woman named Gwendolyn Hayes ended up acquiring the station. Spann was the blues part of it. As a matter of fact, he entertained and promoted, entertained and promoted.

The station also became a pioneer in talk radio. As a matter of fact, before there was talk radio, Wesley South, one of the partners, had a talk radio program called "On Target". And this was years and years and years ago. "On Target". It is hard to believe that talk now dominates in many places. So WVON was a pioneer of talk radio.

It also has become the powerhouse of communication in the Chicagoland area, especially for African Americans. Talk all day long about whatever is going on in the community, whatever is going on in Chicago, and whatever is going on in the world, WVON. As a matter of fact, many of my neighbors and friends wait to wake up in the morning so that they can listen to WVON especially, beginning at 6:00 o'clock in the morning.

But not only was Pervis Spann a tremendous promoter, but he also was a tremendous businessman period. Ultimately the station came into the hands of his daughter, Melody Spann-Cooper, who has taken it to new heights. If it is not heard on VON, it did not happen if it was not part of the discussion on WVON. So it is much more than entertainment. It is the community's town-hall all day long, every day, whatever it is, WVON leads the way.

So I simply wanted to express condolences to his family on his passing and also let his family know how much Pervis Spann has meant to Chicago, how much it has meant to the socialization of the community, how much it has meant to the business promotion of the community, and how much it has meant to the spirituality of the community. On Sunday afternoons there is kind of a gospel-political atmosphere created, so that some people can hardly wait to get home from church so they can turn on VON so they can listen to

the "Gospel with Pam Morris Walton" show.

So Pervis may have been the bluesman, and he may have entertained all the greats. Pervis Spann was noted and known as the person who named Aretha Franklin the "Queen of Soul". He gave her that designation, and it stuck. So Melody will carry on in the tradition of her father as VON is the voice not just of the Negro—that was what the VON stood for—but the voice of the Nation, WVON, Pervis Spann.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, this month is Women's History Month, and we celebrate Women's History Month because of the tremendous progress that has been made.

I am always reminded that when a group of men sat in the room and stated that we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, they didn't really mean all men. They meant some men. They meant the men whom they felt had enough knowledge, enough resources, and enough interests to make decisions for the country. Therefore, all men were not in the room.

As a matter of fact, African-American men who were in slave States were not even considered as a full man. African-American slaves were considered as three-fifths. They had something called the three-fifths compromise which meant that they would only count African-American slaves as three-fifths of a person when they were counting up for the Census, not all men and no women.

As a matter of fact, women didn't get the right to vote in this country until a little more than 100 years ago. Yet, as a result of suffrage, protests, struggle, and changes, now a woman is the Vice President of the United States. So there has been movement, although not nearly enough and not nearly what there has to be. So the struggle will continue so that ultimately there will be levels of equity in this country for women, Blacks, and other citizens who don't have it and have not had it.

The woman that I chose to mention at this time is a woman, Merri Dee, who was an icon in broadcasting and philanthropy. Merri Dee was born in Chicago in 1936, the youngest of six children. She was only 2 years old when her mother died. Her father ultimately became sick and, of course, he had remarried. She was adopted by her stepmother, and she maintained that life was pretty rough for her until she got to the fifth grade and met a wonderful teacher who helped to change her life.

She stated in an interview that this teacher, a Mrs. Robinson, told her that she would be great. She believed in that teacher, and then she went on and became great.

She graduated from Englewood High School, went back to New Orleans and enrolled in Xavier University where she studied business administration. She, of course, dropped out and took a job at IBM to help her other brothers

and sisters. She then worked, got married, got divorced, had a daughter, got a good job, and she just felt that she was spending too much time away at her job and from her child, so she quit that job, and somebody told her: You have a gift for gab.

She decided to study broadcasting and journalism.

She did, and she got so good at it, eventually she got her first show, a radio show. She did that for a bit, and then she got a television show, became excellent at it, and became one of the top female broadcasters in the United States.

As a matter of fact, she was so good, she did that, then she ran into a little difficulty. She and one of her guests were kidnapped leaving the show, robbed, shot, left for dead, and with two bullets in her head she crawled up to the highway where someone picked her up, took her to the hospital, and she stayed hospitalized for a year.

As a matter of fact, she was told that she wouldn't make it and had two last rites given to her, one by the Reverend Jesse Jackson who was indeed a friend of hers. But she prevailed and lived and was in the hospital for a year. She came back, got hired by WGN Television, and she became an anchor. She did that for 11 years. Then they asked her to take the job as director of community relations and public affairs and their children's charities, and she did.

She generated \$31 million for the charities and for the philanthropic work. She just kept doing it. I have never known anybody who was more open and more giving. I must have gone to at least hundreds of charitable events over the years where Merri Dee was the announcer. She was the facilitator. She was the person making it happen.

So when we design and define what greatness is, Merri Dee was obviously a great woman, a great broadcaster, a tremendous communicator, and a person who could stir audiences and groups and convince people to give thousands of dollars for needy causes.

So, Mr. Speaker, I salute Merri Dee. I salute her, and I revere her. I know that if people go up that way, that she is up there walking among the angels and putting on events and activities and waiting for other people to come.

□ 1715

#### REMEMBERING HAROLD WASHINGTON

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, finally, I will mention, although it is Women's History Month, I will mention now an African-American male who was a transformative figure in the life, especially of a big city that was the third largest city in the United States of America, a gentleman named Harold Washington, who became the first African-American mayor of the city of Chicago.

Harold, if he was alive now, would be celebrating his 100th birthday. He would be 100 years old.

Harold was a transformative figure in the political life of Chicago. Chicago

was known as the city of the big shoulders, known as many things. But it was a patronage-laden city. Patronage guided the politics of Chicago.

For a long time, it had a tradition that if somebody went to city hall or to State government or county government to get a job, the saying was: "Don't bring nobody, didn't nobody see it," basically meaning that unless you had a letter from a ward boss or from some elected official who was part of the system, even if it was a job that you had ten times the qualifications for, you wouldn't get it. You wouldn't get it because you didn't have the hook-up; you didn't have the connection.

We actually convinced Harold Washington, I am sure, to run for mayor. He had become a Member of Congress. He had been the Democratic lead on the voting rights bill. Of course, in the mid '60s and '70s, that was still hot, just as it is hot today.

It is amazing that we can't get the voting rights extension granted, especially when all politicians in this country basically suggest that they believe in democracy, that they believe in democratic principles, and that they believe that everybody should have a right to participate and express themselves. Then we go through this process of wrangling to make it happen.

But somehow or another, there seems to be a block. I don't know; maybe people have changed their minds from what they learned in grammar school or in high school or what they read in the Constitution and all of that. It seems that way.

Nevertheless, Harold Washington was convinced by people like Lou Palmer, people like Vernon Jarrett, people like myself and others, to run for the mayor of the city of Chicago. He said: Well, if you guys really want me to run for mayor, you have got to show it. If you don't show it, I won't do it. You have got to get some people registered to vote, and you have got to raise some money.

I remember sitting in a room in Lou Palmer's basement, eating watermelon, as a matter of fact, about 10 or 12 of us. We then said to Harold Washington: Well, Harold, you can go on to your next meeting. And we set out to generate the conditions and meet the conditions that he had set.

Harold was so astute, such a charmer, such an intellectual, but he also liked to walk the streets and talk to people in the alley and talk to people who other people probably wouldn't.

I never will forget that I had set up a meeting with a bunch of motorcycle riders for Harold to go to, and some of his campaign people didn't want him to come. Motorcycle riders, the Born Losers, the Buzzing Bees, and Dragons. Harold said: I will be there. Of course, he came, and everybody had donned their leather jackets and all those things.

After he got elected, we ended up with some plaques that the motorcycle

riders gave to Harold and to me. I don't know what happened to his. Mine is still around.

But when Harold got elected, the city council organized against him. There were 29 people on the other side and 21 of us. We called it the 29-21. Ultimately, we ended up with a 25-25 split. Every item that came up, there would be 25 votes for it and 25 votes against it. Then, of course, Harold would get a chance to break the tie.

He had such a sense of fairness that he went all over the city assuring every community that they would be treated the same as every other community, that they would get a part of the infrastructure money, that their schools would be prepared, and that their sidewalks would be repaired and fixed.

He became bigger than life. As a matter of fact, when Harold died, people celebrated in the streets and spent days walking through to pay reverence. That is because he helped people understand that government belonged to them, and they did not necessarily belong to government.

When people ask what was the transformation, the transformation was that the patronage system was seriously diminished. The transformation was the greatest participation, in terms of turnout in elections, would occur, because the people felt that they had somebody in the highest office who respected and recognized what they had to say.

Harold would stop on the street and have a townhall, and 15, 20 people would gather around. It wasn't his intent to stop on the street. He just stopped and would spend time.

Someone asked me what was one of my fondest memories or stories about Harold Washington. I told them it was the fact that I drove a car for 19 years. In 19 years, the car had sort of rusted in the floor, and I put a plank there. We were someplace and Harold wanted a ride to tell me something or ask me something, so he told his guys to go ahead and he was going to ride to the next stop with me. When he got in the car, the plank had shifted. He looked down and said: "What the . . ."

I said: "Mr. Mayor, don't worry about that. Just push that plank back over, and you won't even know that there is no floor."

He said: "Why don't you buy yourself a car?" Well, I didn't get one right then. Eventually, I did.

Harold Washington transformed the politics of Chicago. Harold Washington gave being an elected official in Chicago a new meaning, that it was not just about glad handing and backslapping. It was about trying to serve and serving the people.

Harold, you did your job, you did it well, and we pray tribute to you even during Women's History Month.

RECOGNIZING CHICAGO'S UKRAINIAN VILLAGE

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as I prepare to close, I can't help but be reminded that I represent a

community in Chicago that we fondly call Ukrainian Village. That is because most of the people there are of Ukrainian heritage.

We have a rally every week. We have everything that you can possibly have, with the hope and with the faith that our President, that our country, will stay on the course. We have no doubt that we will continue to protect Ukraine as a part of the humanity that this country, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," needs to express, because we know that so goes Ukraine, so goes the other countries nearby, and, ultimately, so will go the United States of America.

Ukraine is a part of us. We are a part of Ukraine. Together, I think we will beat back the murderous, cowardly pact. We will be pressed to the wall, but always, as Claude McKay would say, always, always fighting back.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### WHAT GOOD HAS BEEN DONE IN THE LAST YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TORRES of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I want to apologize right now, because I have had a lot of coffee, and I am just cranky today. I am just cranky. I also apologize for those who have to try to keep track. I will, on occasion, try to slow down. I torment them on occasion by talking too fast.

I started to do part of this a week ago and only wanted to do a little part, but we have a 10 o'clock shutdown rule, so I got up against the clock and had to stop. So, God forbid, they let me have the entire hour, which means I brought a whole bunch of boards.

A week ago, I pitched to some of our friends here a really mean, difficult, and absolutely honest question: Tell me something good that has been done in the last year of absolute control of Congress, of the White House, and of, functionally, the levers of our Government. Tell us something good that has been done policy-wise, legislative-wise, that has passed here for working men and women, for the future of my 6-year-old daughter, for people's retirement security, what has actually happened here.

Then I am going to walk through a whole bunch of things where the words, the virtue signaling, the discussion had great language, warm and fuzzy and caring, and it has actually been devastating to poor people, to the working poor.

I don't think they meant to, but the fact of the matter is, at some point, my brothers and sisters on the left have to have a brutally honest conversation with themselves of what their policies are doing.

We are going to start with, being from a border State, immigration. But it is not immigration. It is opening up the border. What has the Democrats' policy, what has this President's policy, on functionally ignoring the border, done to my community in Arizona and to the country.

□ 1730

First, let's also get our heads around the scale of the numbers when you start seeing that border encounters increased 278 percent, functionally, in a year, when you start seeing numbers over 1.7 million crossings, when you start seeing crossings that are in the millions.

But do you remember all the speechifying that was here a year ago? Do you remember how mean the last President was? We are going to be compassionate and loving.

Does anyone here understand the economic concept of first degree, second degree, third degree effects, what you have done to my communities in Phoenix, what you have done to the communities in this country? Let's show the actual math.

Now, I also have an economic premise, and we have done this presentation multiple times. They were written by liberal economists that talked about the two things you do to make the working poor poorer.

Number one was inflation. Well, congratulations. We are going to talk about that.

Number two was open borders, and it was a very simple concept. If you look at the profile of our brothers and sisters who we would categorize—and I hate these categories, but we do them for policy purposes—who are considered the working poor, they are often our brothers and sisters who did not graduate high school, who sell their labor. That is their income.

You open up the border and import millions of individuals who their economic contribution will be to sell their labor. One of these economic papers, written a decade ago, says you have just taken the working poor in the country and made them poor for another decade. One of them talks about that their income, at the end of the decade, will be at least 6 percent lower.

For all those folks that like to preach about compassion, where is the compassion for those who are just grinding it out, trying to survive here? Do you understand that, at some point, the math always wins?

Let's have a little fun here. Here is my premise, and I am going to try to do this on a number of these boards.

You open up the border. We are going to talk about how many of our brothers and sisters and families and the kids in my community and across this country are now dying of fentanyl.

I did a ride-along a month ago with one of my neighbors who happens to be a police sergeant in a portion of north central Phoenix. He is telling me that, a year ago—and I am not going to get